



## Getting an OTC (Over-the-Counter) Permit

January 2002

Each year about 17,000 applications for permits that generally do not require plan review are taken in at DCLU's Over-the-Counter (OTC) permit desk. This Client Assistance Memo (CAM) gives a general summary of the types of permits handled by the OTC team and the streamlined services they provide.

### Types Of Permits Eligible

The vast majority of OTC permit applications are issued while the applicant waits, with no plan review required. These include:

- Electrical
- Boiler
- Pressure vessel
- Refrigeration
- OTC Mechanical
- Signs
- Fire alarms
- Elevator

Permit types that do require plan review include elevator permits, certain electrical permits, fire alarms with seven or more devices installed, and certain mechanical permits.

### Fees

The fees listed in this CAM are based on the 2001 Fee Ordinance. To see the current Fee Ordinance, visit [www.cityofseattle.net/dclu/about/dclufees.htm](http://www.cityofseattle.net/dclu/about/dclufees.htm).

### Streamlined Service Features

Most of OTC permits are taken in by Permit Technicians in the DCLU Applicant Services Center (located on the 20th floor of Key Tower at 700 Fifth Avenue). The application process has been streamlined so that:

- no appointment is necessary
- up to two permits can be taken in at a time from one applicant; more permit applications are taken in from one applicant at one time if no one else is waiting at this counter
- application forms can be obtained online
- applications for electrical permits requiring no plans are accepted online ([www.cityofseattle.net/dclu/permitdesk](http://www.cityofseattle.net/dclu/permitdesk))
- applications may be mailed in or faxed (when no plans are required)
- walk-ins are given priority and waiting time is usually less than 20 minutes
- fees may be paid by cash, check, or credit card
- through a process called Advance Deposit Account, applicants for basic electrical permits and for OTC mechanical permits can pay permit fees online or by fax

**Plumbing** permits are approved onsite by Seattle/King County Health Department staff. Permits for elements like **water heaters, street use, side sewers, and sewer capping** may also be required by the Seattle Transportation Department (SEATRAN), which may be reached at (206) 684-5253. DCLU staff will try to alert you to these requirements, but you should be prepared to research these yourself by contacting the appropriate department.

## General OTC Permitting Requirements

### ELECTRICAL

In general a permit and inspection are required any time electrical wiring is installed, altered, extended, or connected to any electrical equipment. A permit is not required for changing receptacles, switches, ballasts, and fuses. Special events, such as street fairs that have temporary power installations, require an electrical permit.

The applicant must supply the following information:

- Work site address
- Applicant information
- Installer information
- Brief job description
- Itemized list of what is to be installed, for example: number of receptacles (connections), lights, switches, bath fans, washers, dryers, ranges, and services.

### Electrical Plan Review

For small electrical projects, plans are usually not required. However, plan review **is** required for:

- electrical service size, feeder size, or equipment rated 400 amps or higher
- emergency generators, regardless of feeder size, if the generator is to be used to supply power for life safety equipment (lighting, shaft pressurization equipment, etc.)
- electrical work in hospitals, schools and institutions
- unique or particularly complex projects

When plans are required, two sets of drawings (minimum size 11" x 17") and one set of specifications must be submitted as part of the permit application. The following information must be provided on the plans and specifications:

- Complete riser and one-line diagram including services and feeders showing wire sizes and conduit sizes
- Floor plans showing basic circuitry
- Switchboard and panel schedules
- Load calculations and load summaries showing demand factors

- Fault current calculation (provide this information on the application if the available fault current is known at that time; the calculation must be provided prior to the service inspection)
- Voltage—120/240 single phase; 120/240 three phase; 120/208 three phase; 277/480 three phase
- Key to symbols on the plans
- Fixture schedule
- Lighting summary schedule for compliance with the Seattle Energy Code
- Any other information that is significant or relevant for the plans examiner review of the drawings

**Fees:** All OTC electrical permits have a base fee of \$35.00; additional fees are charged based on what is being installed and at what amperage. Rates for temporary power inspections vary depending on whether inspections are scheduled during or outside of normal working hours.

If your electrical work involves installation of a new service panel or meter, or involves relocation of your electrical meter, you need to contact Seattle City Light. If the site is **north** of Denny Way, call (206) 615-0600. If the site is **south** of Denny Way, call (206) 386-4200.

### BOILER

All boilers installed in the City of Seattle require a permit and an inspection. If this boiler is to be used for domestic heat, a heat loss calculation needs to be submitted with the application.

The applicant must supply the following information:

- Work site address
- Applicant information
- Owner/tenant of the work site
- Installer information
- Boiler information: manufacture's name, boiler type—electric, steam, hot water, gas, oil, propane
- Identification number
- Heating surface in square feet
- BTUs per hour input

**Fees:** For a normal boiler in a residence, the fee starts at \$110.00. For commercial or industrial boilers where additional fuels or monitoring is needed, additional fees are charged.

**REFRIGERATION**

A refrigeration permit is required whenever remote refrigerant lines are installed.

In order to obtain a refrigeration permit, the installing refrigeration contractor must have a valid refrigeration license with the City of Seattle.

The applicant must supply the following information:

- Work site address
- Applicant information
- Description of installation
- Work site owner/tenant information
- Installer information including the City of Seattle refrigeration/air-conditioning license number.
- Hp rating of each compressor and number of units

**Fees:** The base fee for refrigeration is \$29.00, plus \$29.00 for each compressor up to 5 horsepower.

**OTC MECHANICAL**

Types of work that can generally be handled as an OTC mechanical permit include:

- Ductwork revisions and additions to existing duct systems
- Replacement of equipment in kind (certain limitations apply)
- Installation of bathroom exhaust fans on existing commercial systems
- Certain residential exhaust fans
- New cooling-only units in specific circumstances
- Work value \$10,000 or less, except for certain unit venting.

To apply, fill out an OTC Mechanical Application Packet, available at the OTC Mechanical Counter in the ASC or online at [www.cityofseattle.net/dclu/publications/forms](http://www.cityofseattle.net/dclu/publications/forms). The packet includes an OTC mechanical permit checklist, application form, and contact disclosure form (required when the project is valued over \$5,000), which need to be completed and returned to the OTC Mechanical Counter, along with full payment of permit fees.

Applicants may choose to set up an Advance Deposit Account, which allows mechanical permits to be applied, obtained and paid for electronically (instructions about how to set up this account are included in the application packet).

**Fees:** The usual fee for furnaces, stoves, and fireplace inserts is \$80.00. Other mechanical permit fees are based upon valuation of the project.

For information on the more complicated mechanical permits that require plan review, and therefore don't qualify for an OTC permit as described above, see CAM 415.

**PRESSURE VESSEL (UNFIRED)**

A pressure vessel is a closed container having a nominal internal diameter exceeding six inches and a volume exceeding 1-1/2 cubic feet. Air compressors, expansion tanks, and air tanks are examples of pressure vessels.

The applicant must supply the following information:

- Work site address
- Applicant information
- Description of installation
- Installer information
- Pressure vessel information:
  - Type
  - Manufacturer's name
  - Identification number on the pressure vessel
  - Size: Diameter or maximum width in inches and length in inches
- Identification number

**Fees:** The minimum fee is \$74.00.

**SIGN/AWNING PERMITS**

A permit is required for any commercial sign or awning, with the exception of non-illuminated signs under 10 square feet that are not visible from the street.

Electrical signs must be installed by a registered contractor, unless installed by the business owner.

Plans are required for all sign/awning permit applications. Drawings must be on 11" x 17" or larger paper. The applicant must supply the following information:

- Applicant information
- Work site address
- Description of work to be performed
- Size of sign or graphics
- Business name, contact name and telephone number

- Installer information, including State license number
- Street use permit number, if applicable
- Department of Neighborhoods approval number, if applicable
- DCLU map page

**Fees:** The basic fee for signs is \$80.00 for the first 100 square feet, plus \$0.65 per square foot over that size. Awning fees are based on the development fee index (\$95.00 for the first \$1000 value and \$1.00 for each additional \$100.00 value).

### **FIRE ALARMS**

Plans and specifications must be reviewed and approved prior to installation. The Fire Department will review the plans when seven or more devices are installed and the system is required to be installed. Three sets of drawings and specifications must be submitted as part of the permit applications; they must be on at least 11" x 17" paper. The applicant must supply the following information:

- Floor plan
- Riser diagram
- Location of all alarm-initiating and alarm-indicating devices
- Alarm control and trouble-signaling equipment
- Annunciation
- Power connection
- Battery calculations
- Voltage drop calculations
- Wiring types and sizes

For more information on fire alarms, call the Seattle Fire Department at (206) 386-1450 or (206) 386-1443.

**Fees:** The basic fee is \$35.00. Each fire alarm controller and each device (such as horn, strobe, speaker, etc.) cost an additional small fee. Additional Fire Department fees may apply.

### **ELEVATOR PERMITS**

Elevator permits are required for installation of all elevators, escalators, moving walks, dumbwaiters, handicap lifts, and material lifts in public and private buildings and private residences.

Plan review (two sets of plans) is required for all elevator permits. The applicant must supply the following information:

- Work site address
- Name of building

- Applicant (permit holder) information
- Owner/tenant information
- Description of work

**Fees:** Elevator fees are complex. Please refer to the Fee Ordinance or contact staff.

### **Application Forms**

Application forms are available on the DCLU website at **[www.cityofseattle.net/dclu/publications/forms](http://www.cityofseattle.net/dclu/publications/forms)** or contact the Public Resource Center (see details below).

### **Questions?**

If you have any questions about OTC permits—other than sign, awning and billboard permits, which should be directed to the sign inspector in the DCLU Applicant Services Center, (206) 684-8419—contact the OTC Permit Desk staff as follows:

#### **OTC Permits**

DCLU Applicant Services Center  
20th floor of Key Tower  
700 Fifth Avenue (downtown Seattle)

**Phone:** (206) 684-8464  
(206) 684-8850 (OTC **mechanical** only)

**Fax:** (206) 684-8113  
(206) 684-7866 (OTC **mechanical** only)

#### **Mailing Address:**

DCLU, OTC Permits  
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000  
Seattle, WA 98104-5070  
(NOTE: If for OTC mechanical, please state on envelope.)

**Hours:** Mon, Wed, Fri: 7:30 am - 5:30 pm  
Tues, Thurs: 10:30 am - 5:30 pm

## **Access to Information**

Links to electronic versions of DCLU **Client Assistance Memos (CAMs), Director's Rules, and Forms** are available on the "Publications" and "Codes" pages of our website at **[www.cityofseattle.net/dclu](http://www.cityofseattle.net/dclu)**. Paper copies of these documents are available from our Public Resource Center, located on the 20th floor of Key Tower at 700 Fifth Avenue in downtown Seattle, (206) 684-8467.

**PLEASE NOTE:** DCLU public information documents should not be used as substitutes for codes and regulations. Details of your project should be reviewed for specific compliance by DCLU staff.